SPARK GAP

Vol. 42, Issue 4 & 5, April/May 2025 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities*

On Our MARC:

Remember the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is meeting at the Johnson County REMC Community room at 8:00AM. The Johnson County REMC is located at 750 International Drive in Franklin. You do not have to be a member to attend meetings and you are also encouraged to bring friend with you.

Hope to see you all this Saturday morning.

Ham Radio 101: Reasons Why It's a Smart Idea to Save Your Original Manufacturer's Shipping Box

DX Engineering is always looking for ways to make your purchasing experience with us exceptional, from your initial contact on the web or with one of our experienced reps to fast delivery to your door. Today, we're offering a friendly piece of advice that could save you some headaches down the road.

After you receive your package from DX Engineering, we encourage you to save the original box along with any packing material, especially if you purchase a transceiver, amplifier, tuner, or other piece of equipment with sensitive parts.

From the DX Engineering sales team, here are some reasons why you should make this standard practice:

- In case you ever need to ship your transceiver, amplifier, or other device, having the original manufacturer's box and packing material (e.g., customized inserts) makes it more convenient to package while reducing the possibility of damage that could result from sending it off in a container not specifically made to protect the equipment during transport. Think of the three Rs (repairs, returns, replacements) and you'll surely remember to retain the original container.
- The original box provides the best protection if you're moving your belongings—and station—to a new QTH.
- If you ever need to reference the bar code and serial number, you can usually find those on the box.
- If you ever plan to resell the item, having it in the original box gives potential buyers greater confidence in making the purchase. You can also store your manual and accessories in the box, another confidence-builder when trying to sell your used gear.

No one likes to have to ship their gear after purchase, but it happens. So, save the box and make it easier for everyone involved. Visit the **DX Engineering Help Center** for more useful advice on making your purchasing experience with DXE as smooth and successful as possible.

Thanks.... Chris -- KQ9Y

Birthdays for the month of April:

N9RO -- Shane Aldrich
KI6QOG -- Jacki Frederick
KD9OQC -- Richard Szepski
AB9C -- Chris Eadler
N7PRT -- Paul Thompson
N9ZYE -- Gary Gill

Birthdays for the month of May:

K9BEB - Brandon Burtra,
KC9GCH - Linda Harshbarger
KA9QBF - Joseph Lovrini
KD9YNG - Monty LeClair
N9FEB - Mike Palmer

Weather Ops-ervations

by KC9NJM

The State of Indiana is already off to a busy 2025 severe weather season. Before the mid point of April there have already been 44 confirmed tornadoes which is double the annual statewide average of 22. The twisters have spanned from the far northern to the far southern areas of the state and extended from the Illinois to Ohio lines.

Along with severe storms came torrential rains that literally saturated the state from north to south. Rivers, streams, and other tributaries in central and southern Indiana approached or exceeded flood stages, including those in Johnson County where rainfall ranged from 5.6 - 6.75 inches over a 4-day period. As an example Youngs Creek in Franklin crested at 12.6 feet, short of its 15.7 foot 2008 record, but none-the-less flooding parks and closing roads.

With the majority of our severe weather season still in front of us, one can only hope that the pattern that has emerged so far will calm in the days and week ahead.

Remembering Palm Sunday 1965

April 11, 2025 was the 60th anniversary of the Palm Sunday tornadoes that swept through northern Indiana in the late afternoon and early evening. When the storms had ended they had left 137 people dead and 1200 injured in our state alone. All toll the tornadoes touched five states and took the lives of 271, injuring 1500. The resulting devastation brought then President Lyndon Johnson to Elkhart Indiana to survey the damage and to promise federal support to assist in the recovery. The Palm Sunday tornadoes stand as the deadliest outbreak to ever impact Indiana and are also viewed as the catalyst for severe weather forecasting, education, and warning.

Sources: NWS, The Daily Journal, The Indianapolis Star, WTHR

Buttons are back, baby!

Dan KB6NU

Several years ago, I got a good deal on a Flex 6400 and thought I'd give it a try. It's a great radio, and I enjoyed using it, but after a couple of years, I decided to give it up and buy an Icom IC-7610 instead. The main reason was the user interface—the IC-7610 has real knobs and buttons instead of just a computer screen to control its functions. Maybe I'm just being old school (I am certainly getting old), but I prefer real knobs and buttons, even if those knobs and buttons are just providing digital inputs to the processor controlling the radio.

Recently, I've run across a couple of articles that back me up on this. The first, "Touchscreens are out, and tactile controls are back," is an interview in IEEE Spectrum with Rachel Plotnick, an associate professor of cinema and media studies at Indiana University in Bloomington, and a leading expert on buttons and how people interact with them.

She says that while touchscreens are a useful interface, people are becoming somewhat fatigued by the use of them. "People seem to have a hunger for physical buttons," she says, "both because you don't always have to look at them—you can feel your way around for them when you don't want to directly pay attention to them—but also because they offer a greater range of tactility and feedback."

She also said something else I found interesting. "Buttons tend to offer you a really limited range of possibilities in terms of what you can do. Maybe that simplicity of limiting our field of choices offers more safety in certain situations."

I might say that it also makes the user interface more straightforward and easy to understand and use. Take the receiver incremental tuning (RIT) control, for example. I use this control frequently on my IC-7610, I press a button to turn it on and a knob to set the offset. On the Flex, however, using the SmartSDR software, I'd have to go to the X/RIT menu, click on the RIT button on the screen, then set the offset by clicking right or left arrows or by typing in a text box. It's just not as simple to do as on the IC-7610, so I found myself using that control less often.

On my IC-7610, the RIT controls are conveniently located in the lower right-hand corner.

The second article is “Subaru is bringing back physical knobs and buttons in its cars.” The article begins, “To the relief of practically anybody who drives a car regularly, Japanese carmaker Subaru has brought back physical buttons and knobs for its 2026 Outback midsize SUV. It’s yet another sign that carmakers are finally starting to listen, ditching massive touchscreens that have taken over a vast number of vehicle controls in favor of tactile buttons, switches, and knobs.”

Of course, touchscreens are the appropriate choice for many transceiver functions. The IC-7610 touch screen not only displays the waterfall, but also lets you select a signal by touching it on the screen. That works great for me.

The lesson to be learned here is that a good user interface can help increase sales. These days, almost all of the radios from the major manufacturers are so good that the average ham can’t really detect a difference in performance. That leaves the user interface as one of the differentiating features, and you’d think that a more usable user interface would sell more radios. And, it appears that physical, tactile buttons and knobs are going to be a part of that user interface.

BUY SELL or TRADE

1. TYT TH-9800 Quad band mobile/base transceiver – 25/50/2M/70 cm less than one year old – like new – with manual – $ 100.00

2. Used Kenwood TM-6707A 2M/70cm mobile/base unit 50w – works well – with manual and mic --- FREE

3. Jetstream JTB 3 antenna – 6.5 dbi with radials --- FREE

4. Dual band commercial YAGI antenna --- $ 20.00

5. Switching power supply 1or 2 $ 10.00

All for pick up only in Greenwood

Ron Knudsen AG7QE viking9321@gmail.com 317-601-3937

2025 Hamfests List

05/16-18/2025 - Dayton Hamvention

- Location: Dayton, OH
- Address: Greene County Expo Center
- 120 Fairground Rd
- Xenia, OH 45385
- Talk-In: 146.94- 123.0 PL
- Sponsor: Dayton Amateur Radio Association
- Website: https://hamvention.org/

07/19/2025 - Auburn Hamfest

- `NEEDS Confirmed`
- Location: Auburn, IN
- Address: Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum
- 1600 Wayne Street
- Auburn, IN 46706
- Talk-In: 147.015+ 141.3pl
- Sponsor: Northeastern Indiana Amateur Radio Association
- Website: http://w9ou.org

07/20/2025 - Van Wert Hamfest

- Location: Van Wert, OH

- Address: Van Wert County Fairground
- 1055 S. Washington Street
- Van Wert, OH 45891
- Talk-In: 146.850-
- Sponsor: Van Wert Amateur Radio Club
- Website:http://w8fy.org

07/26/2025 - East Central Indiana HAMFEST

- Location : Jay County Fairgrounds Portland, IN
- Address: 806 E Votaw St
- Portland, Indiana 47375
- Talk-In: 147.300+ 127.3pl
- Website: ECIHamfest

08/02/2025 - Elkhart East Hamfest

- Location: Elkhart, IN
- Address: Northern Indiana Event Center’s Orthwein Pavilion
- 21565 Executive Pkwy
- Elkhart, IN 46514
- Talk-In: 147.330+ PL 131.8
- Sponsor:
- Website: https://elkharteasthamfest.com/

08/09/2025 - Cincinnati Hamfest

- Location: Owensville, OH
- Address: Clermont County Fairgrounds
- 1000 Locust St.
- Owensville, OH 45160
- Talk-In: 147.345+ PL 123.0
- Sponsor: Milford ARC
- Website: https://CincinnatiHamfest.org

08/09/2025 - Hendricks County Tailgate Fest

- `NEEDS Confirmed`
- Location: Avon, IN
- Address: Avon United Methodist Church
- 6850 E. US Hwy 36
- Avon, IN 46123
- Talk-In: 145.130- PL88.5
- Sponsor: Ham Emergency Radio Operations

08/10/2025 - ARANCI Hamfest

- `NEEDS Confirmed`
- Location: Lake Village, IN

- Address: Lake Village Community Center
- 9728 North 300 West
- Lake Village, IN 46349
- Talk-In: 145.330- pl 131.8
- Sponsor: ARANCI

10/11/2025 - Hoosier Hills Hamfest

- Location: Bedford, IN
- Address: Lawrence County 4-H Fairgrounds
- 11265 US-50
- Bedford, IN 47421
- Talk-In: 146.73- PL/107.2
- Sponsor: Hoosier Hills Ham Club
- Website: https://hoosierhillshamfest.com

10/18/2025 - Shelbyville Tailgate

- `NEEDS Confirmed`
- Location: Shelbyville, IN
- Address: Shelby County Fairgrounds
- 500 Frank St
- Shelbyville, IN 46176
- Talk-In: 145.48- 88.5pl
- Website:https://brvars.com/

11/15-16/2025 - Ft Wayne Hamfest

- `NEEDS Confirmed`

- Location: Fort Wayne, IN
- Address: Allen County War Memorial Coliseum
- 4000 Parnell Ave
- Fort Wayne, IN 46805
- Talk-In: 146.88-
- Website: http://www.acarts.com/hfmain.htm

11/29/2025 WVARA Turkeyfest

- Location: Brazil, IN
- Address: Clay County Fairgrounds
- 6550 N SR 59
- Brazil, IN
- Talk-In 146.685- 151.4PL
- Sponsor: Wabash Valley ARA
- Website: W9UUU.org

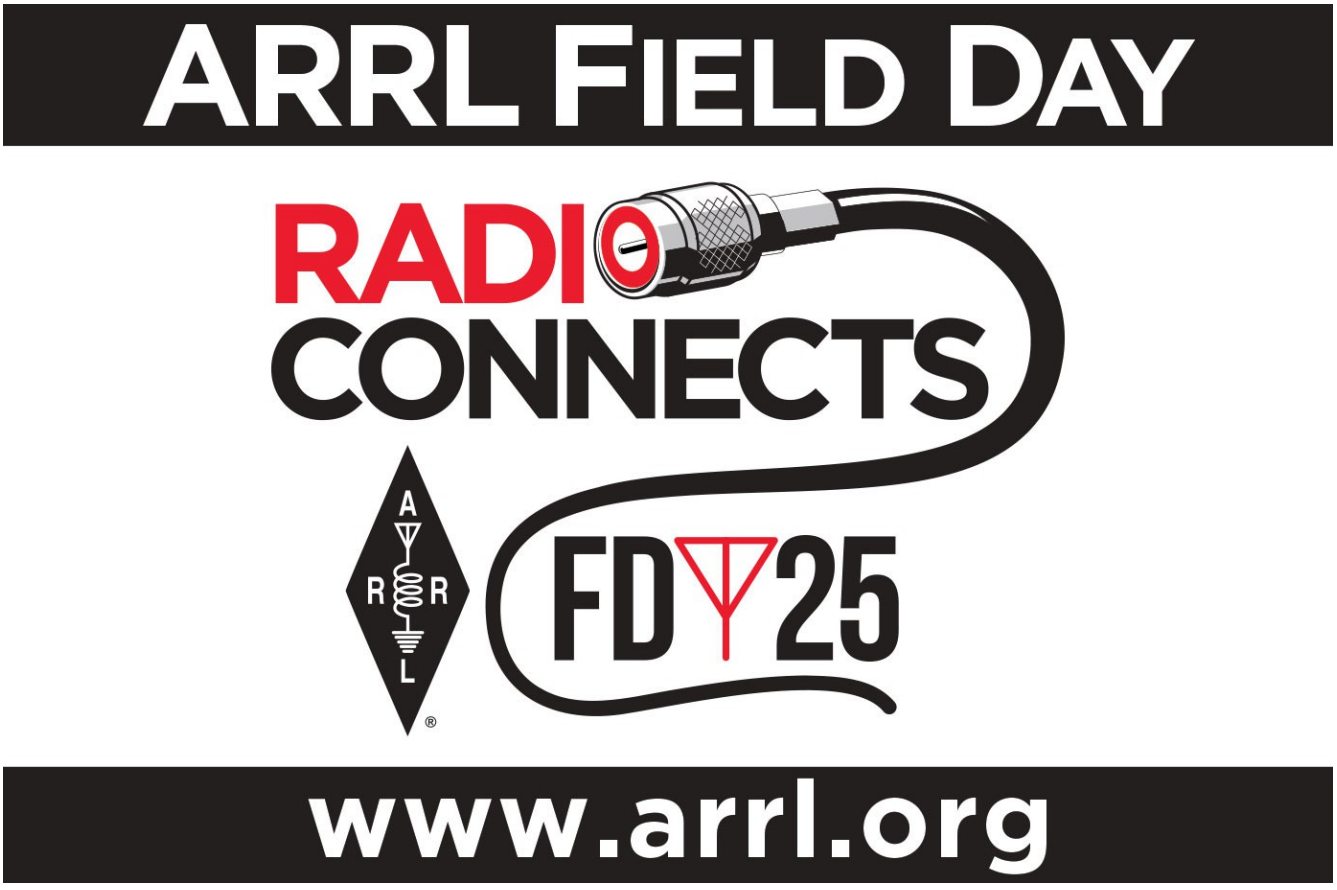
CLUB DUES FOR 2025

It is that time of year for your membership dues for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club. The annual membership dues is $25.00 per year and has not changed from last year.

This also a good time to update any of your information for club records such as license upgrade, change of address, contact information or call sign.

This is also a good opportunity for new amateurs to join our club and join in our club activities for 2025.

Please see Jacki Frederick, KI6QOG M.A.R.C. Treasurer



JUNE 28-29

For more information: www.midstatehams.org

MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY 8:00 AM of each month at the Johnson County REMC building 750 International Dr. Franklin, IN 46131

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

W9MID Repeater:
Offical SkyWarn Repeater for Johnson County

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

W9MID Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone) YEASU SYSTEM FUSION (C4FM)

Club Officers:

President: Tim Aldridge - WC9G
Vice President: Rhonda Curtis - WS9H
Secretary: Jim Adams – KB9JMU
Treasurer: Jacki Frederick - KI6QOG
Repeater Trustee: Chris Frederick – KQ9Y
Club Historian: Art Bleicher – WB9CHR
Club P.I.O. : Rhonda Curtis – WS9H

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club
857 Lionshead Lane
Greenwood, Indiana
46143
Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 3rd week of the month.

Thanks to Johnson Co. REMC for the use of their building for meetings and testing.

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